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# Introductions



**As the national development agency for creativity and culture, we want to build a dynamic and confident sector with the capability to adapt to challenges. These might be specific to artists, arts organisations, museums and libraries, or more wide-ranging societal tests that affect all of our futures. Our long-standing commitment to environmental responsibility is an important part of that ambition.**

It's heartening to see how the organisations that make up our 2018-23 National Portfolio have addressed the climate and biodiversity crises. They have reduced their energy use and carbon emissions, as well as sharing inspiring and positive stories through their Beyond Carbon reporting. This is reflected in the success of the Spotlight programme. It was designed as a targeted response to the fact that a small number of our National Portfolio Organisations were responsible for a significant proportion of the portfolio's carbon emissions. Over the last five years those taking part in Spotlight have reduced their use of electricity by almost a fifth (19%) and gas by more than a third (36%).

As we applaud these successes, it is also a moment to look to the future – recognising the need for urgency in meeting the challenges we face. Our new National Portfolio, which started in April 2023, will help us deliver on the vision of our strategy *Let's Create*. It sets out an expectation for the creative and cultural organisations we invest in to increase their commitment and leadership in environmental responsibility.

We will support that through our new environmental programme, in partnership with Julie's Bicycle. This includes the Board Environmental Champion peer-network and Transforming Energy – which builds on the success of Spotlight to improve building energy efficiency and reduce associated carbon emissions. We hope that our National Portfolio Organisations recognise the value of environmental reporting, and continue to submit the vital data that makes this report possible.

Artists, arts organisations, museums and libraries play many roles in our society. They help us see the world in new ways. They increase our knowledge and inspire us through their creative and cultural outputs. As this report shows, they can do that too by setting an example in their day-to-day operations and actions. Through their commitment to environmental responsibility, our National Portfolio Organisations can help us all learn more about the impact our actions have on our planet, improve our understanding of how changes in behaviour can reduce those impacts, and spur us on to do more.

**Darren Henley**

Chief Executive, Arts Council England





**It's eight years since the gavel landed emphatically on the COP21 negotiating table around which world leaders gathered to reach consensus on keeping the global mean temperature under 2 degrees of warming. The original commitment, subsequently revised down to 1.5 degrees, was a triumph of diplomacy, multilateral cooperation and good sense.**

**2023 was the first time that a reckoning of international progress was undertaken by the UNFCCC. The Global Stocktake was the backdrop for the COP28 climate talks in Dubai. In short, whilst there has been progress far more needs to be done. Culture was also on the agenda, hosting the first Culture Pavilion, and, significantly, a High Level Ministerial Meeting starting a process which would integrate culture into climate policy. So it was a good moment for our own Cultural Stocktake of what the portfolio has achieved over 11 years of light touch, but sustained effort, and what's needed now.**

Just like that iconic gavel in 2015, culture has emphatically landed as an acknowledged vector of climate action. Furthermore, the portfolio proves that pathways to decarbonisation and regeneration are central to cultural purpose and relevance; that action matters internally, and cultural advocacy matters to society writ large. Julie's Bicycle's contractual requirement to the Arts Council to gather and analyse data and trends over a decade has created a longitudinal story of change. This dataset is unique and especially valuable during a period where the sector has had to be relentlessly reactive.

In this portfolio period alone the Spotlight cohort (30 organisations) reduced their GHG emissions by 40%. More broadly, since 2012/13 average emissions per organisation have reduced by 50%. Both these figures are, by any standards, significant. With a portfolio as varied, dispersed and culturally disparate, having evidence to show what can be achieved across a sector is helpful. We need to make the case for culture to all our stakeholders, strenuously and passionately – not only for culture's sake but for all our sakes. And it helps to understand what possibilities and constraints this deeply impactful community of change-makers are experiencing.

Beyond emissions reductions, 94% of organisations include environmental sustainability in core business strategies, 75% have programmed work championing climate themes to audiences and visitors, and 52% report financial benefits. But ultimately, in common with so many cultural data sets, none of this captures the depth of possibility that the arts and culture offer, to transform values, ethics, systems and processes in pursuit of enduring solutions to our profound predicament.

For our Stocktake there are immediate things to do, particularly elevating climate action as the number 1 priority. That includes decarbonising as 'business-as-usual', championing imagination and creativity, and unlocking, through policy and investment, the appropriate resources into human, operational and creative capital; as with other sectors, without significant resources directed equitably and wisely, we will falter.

The UNFCCC Global Stocktake reiterates the consensus that we must unshackle ourselves immediately from dependency on fossil fuels and rapidly deploy the regenerative processes that will sustain the world we need. We are not meeting our targets, and only a whole-of-society approach will do. Failure is unthinkable. Our Cultural Stocktake shows that culture, the very definition of whole-of-society responses, might just have some answers.

**Alison Tickell**  
 Founder and CEO,  
 Julie's Bicycle



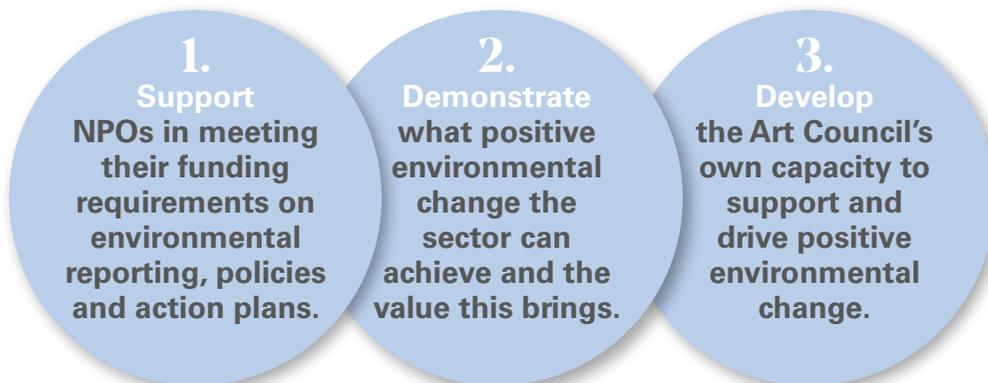
# Arts Council England’s Environmental Programme

## 2018-23

Arts Council England’s Environmental Programme launched in 2012 and paved the way for publicly funded cultural organisations to take climate action, by embedding environmental reporting into its funding agreements. Partnering with Julie’s Bicycle, we now come to the close of the programme for the 2018-23 National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) and can take a moment to reflect on achievements from this period and the continuing development of understanding, agency and leadership on climate and the environment across the cultural sector.

Throughout the 2018-23 programme, 828 NPOs engaged with a rich programme of training, events, resources and thought leadership opportunities. The annual report for this portfolio cohort records progress and celebrates the portfolio’s achievements in driving positive change across their governance, operations and creative practice. The programme was designed to run from 2018-2022, however due to the global impacts of the Covid pandemic, the programme was extended to 2023. This allowed organisations to monitor, report and reflect on a full programme’s worth of data and climate action.

### The aims of the Environmental Programme are to:



### Key programme strands:

- 
  - **Environmental Reporting** – NPOs completing their environmental reporting requirements supported by Julie’s Bicycle Creative Climate Tools<sup>1</sup> and helpdesk.
- 
  - **Core programme** – training (webinars, events) and resources to share and promote good environmental practice and develop the skills for a low-carbon and resilient sector.
- 
  - **Accelerator** – a leadership support programme recruiting two cohorts of organisations/consortia to advance sustainable cultural practice and share insights with the wider sector, focused on extending and testing innovative ideas.
- 
  - **Spotlight** – a leadership support programme working with a cohort of NPOs responsible for some of the highest carbon emissions within the portfolio. Providing leadership support to reduce their environmental impacts and develop Net Zero carbon targets, and training opportunities and resources.
- 
  - **The Colour Green** – a podcast and Lab (environmental training programme), exploring issues of environmental justice and empowering cultural leaders and artists of colour.
- 
  - **Arts Council England support** – supporting Arts Council staff on understanding and communication of environmental and climate issues and the Environmental Programme, and development and delivery of our environmental action plan and carbon footprint.

<sup>1</sup> Formerly called the Creative Green tools

## Environmental reporting data for 2018-23

In this final year of the 18-23 cohort, 656 NPOs completed their environmental reporting, representing 79% of the total portfolio. We also saw high levels of reporting on the Beyond Carbon survey, a voluntary strand of the Creative Climate Tools reporting on environmental actions and benefits. It is clear that organisations remain committed to engaging in environmental action and are keen to celebrate and share their achievement with the wider cultural community.

This year's reporting came at the end of the 2018-23 portfolio period, and the window for reporting was open during the initial months of the new 2023-26 investment programme. Despite the timing within this busy period, overall engagement remained high.

This year, of the 656 organisations that submitted data, 350 of those had also reported in the first year of the portfolio period, 2018-19. To unearth some of the changes in energy-related impacts across the portfolio period, we have compared the impacts of this group of 350 organisations in 2022-23 against their 2018-19 reports to compare like-with-like. This group is broadly representative of the portfolio in terms of discipline and geography.

In addition, to complete the overview of the changes seen during the whole portfolio period, we have reviewed data from the participating group of Spotlight organisations across all years of the 2018-23 Spotlight programme, to analyse energy trends across the duration of the programme.

This year's data is sourced from:

- Environmental reporting using the **Creative Climate Tools** – completed by 656 NPOs, representing 79% of the portfolio.
- The **Spotlight programme**, using data on energy trends from all 30 organisations who have reported consistently since the programme launched in 2018.
- **'Beyond Carbon'** responses as part of the **Creative Climate Tools** – voluntary reporting on environmental action and benefits – completed by 562 NPOs, representing 69% of the portfolio.
- **Case studies** from individual organisations selected to share best practice based on their Beyond Carbon responses (organisations were sampled based on two factors: artform and geographical location).
- An annual **NPO survey** to evaluate the environmental programme, with data collected from 1 May-30 July 2023 – completed by 68 organisations from across the sector.\*

\* Engagement with this survey is much lower than in previous years (which may in part be due to needing to alter the survey timing), which limits the representativeness of the data.

# Voice from the Movement

by Tay Aziz

## Tell us about your work and your journey as an advocate for climate issues?



Climate issues have been a central part of my lived experience from as young as 10 years old when my familial home in Kashmir flooded due to climate-induced heavy rainfall.

This experience has fuelled my activism from an early age to platform marginalised and displaced voices to highlight the impacts the climate crisis has on my community and others.

Through participatory art, communal knowledge sharing and storytelling, my work aims to empower communities, create agency to drive change and spotlight local resiliency. My deliberately slow and co-produced approach is vital to build trust and nurture relationships with the communities I partner with to tell authentic stories about their efforts towards climate resiliency.

My film **Rooted in Bristol**, produced by **Afrika Eye Film Festival** worked to acknowledge and celebrate the contribution over many decades that people of colour in Bristol have made in creating sustainable and productive kitchen gardens on allotments across the city. Following community screenings, we worked to build land justice forums to enable and empower local residents to protect allotment and

growing spaces, challenge private development and facilitate discussions with local councils.

Through my unique blend of participatory sense and art-making and community organising, I strive to platform diverse perspectives, mobilise communities, and foster a sense of collective responsibility and power towards addressing climate issues at both global and local levels.

## Why do you think it's important to combine the world of art with the world of activism?

Creative approaches have the potential to address the complexity of our current challenges in a system designed for endless growth, based upon systematic oppression and exclusion. Activism empowers us to oppose and critique these systems through democratic means. However, art's role in activism goes beyond critique; it helps us envision and propose new, regenerative, and just futures.

When embracing a local, place-based approach, artists and activists can work in tandem to play a pivotal role in raising diverse voices, experimenting and playing with creative technology and tailoring climate resiliency efforts in beautiful ways that enrich the story of a neighbourhood. Through my advisory work with **Grounding Technologies**, I'm exploring how creative technology can support,



Climate issues have been a central part of my lived experience.



Tay Aziz





**Everyone has a role to play in the climate crisis and I love the potential that communal art-making has in inviting new people to the conversation.**

Tay Aziz



enhance and build on the work already happening in communities in service of a just future.

### **What role can art and activism play in shaping a greener future?**

Everyone has a role to play in the climate crisis and I love the potential that communal art-making has in inviting new people to the conversation, whether they consider themselves as ‘artists’ or not. In my **current residency with Knowle West Media Centre**, I hope to build on the inspiring work being done by residents within the neighbourhood, training residents as ‘neighbourhood citizen scientists’ in creative data gathering and storytelling techniques. These trained individuals contribute to communal knowledge by monitoring species, mapping green spaces, and considering their connectivity for our more-than-human kin to move through the neighbourhood. This data has the potential to inform the creation of new planting areas, the establishment of wildlife corridors, and the ability to challenge developments that threaten local biodiversity. By fostering a deeper connection between communities and their green spaces, we are working together to share stories and develop a stronger sense of stewardship over communal land.

### **What do you want to see more of from arts and culture?**

Our art practice can help us envision what a just future looks like, as well as equip audiences with the tools to practise their own creativity and build communal imaginations. What are we fighting for, where are we going, and how do we get there together? As artists, we have a unique position of power in driving culture change that can uplift the core values we all share in our communities. We can champion diverse perspectives, try playful experimentation and use place-based organising to bring together residents, councillors, decision-makers and businesses on topics of shared interest. Neighbourhood creative projects can move communities to social tipping points faster, create cultures of shared learning and shift away from a mindset of scarcity to one that is regenerative, joyful, healing and inclusive for all.



# Key Statistics 2022-23

In 2022-23, 656 NPOs reported on all environmental impact areas divided across venues, offices, productions, festivals/tours and indoor events (some NPOs report on more than one impact area). This snapshot for 2022-23 is based on the most commonly reported impacts: energy, water, waste, business and touring travel<sup>2</sup>.

**29.4 million km TOURING**



**24 million km BUSINESS TRAVEL**

(including car, taxi, rail, aviation & more)



**30,451 tonnes of waste**

(including composting, energy, landfill & recycling)



**Over 2.3 billion litres of water reported**

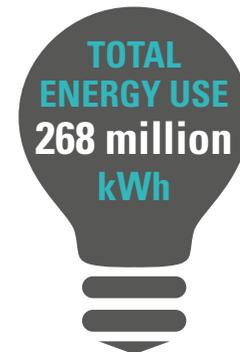
(including usage & treatment)



**TOTAL ELECTRICITY 138 million kWh**



**TOTAL GAS 130 million kWh**



**ENOUGH TO POWER 18,873 UK households<sup>3</sup>**



**£39.4 million TOTAL ENERGY SPEND<sup>4</sup> (gas+electricity)**

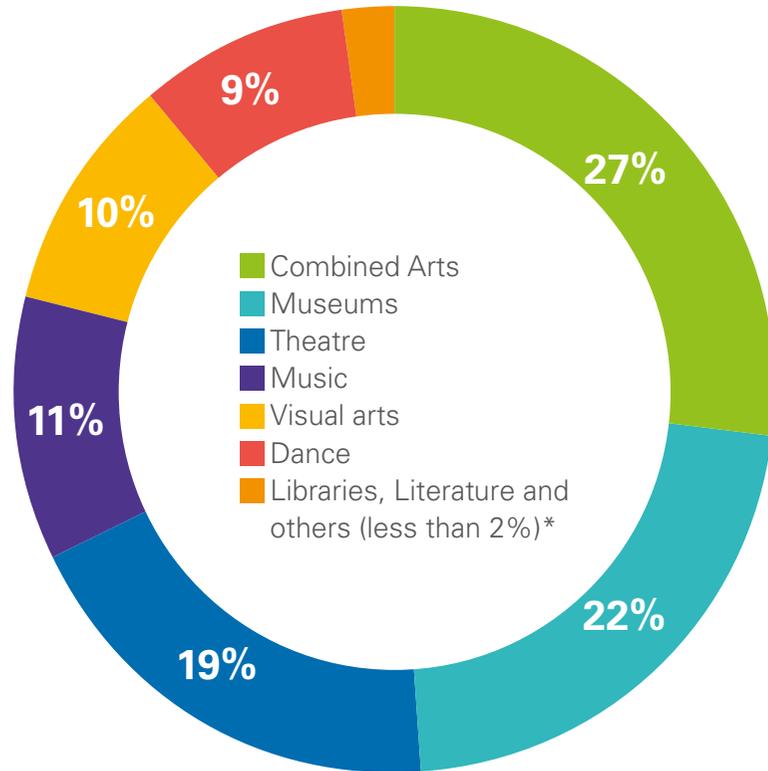


<sup>2</sup> Of these, in the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol, energy impacts constitute scope 1 and 2 emissions sources, and all other impact sources are classed as scope 3 emissions. The GHG Protocol is a global standard used by entities to measure emissions. The standard classifies a company's emissions into three scopes. Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from owned or controlled sources. Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy. Scope 3 emissions are all indirect emissions that occur in the value chain of the reporting company, including both upstream and downstream emissions.

<sup>3</sup> Based on an annual average usage of 14,200 kWh, using data from OFGEM for <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-05/TDCV%202023%20Decision%20Letter.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Calculated averages for 2022 Q2-3-4 and 2023 Q1 of gas and electricity prices in the non-domestic sector, including Climate Change Levy (source [here](#))

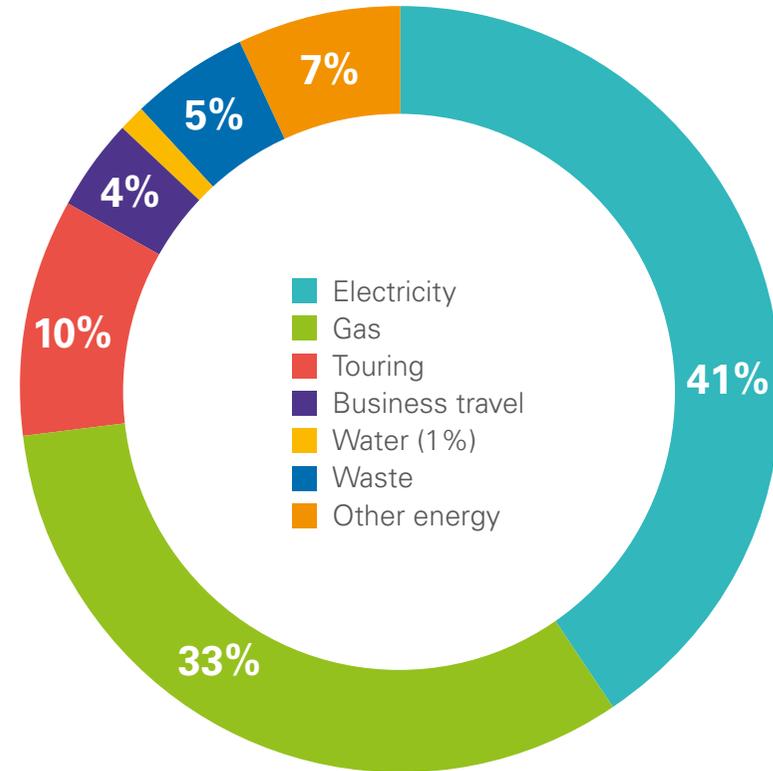
**Total carbon footprint per discipline**



The 2022-23 data provides a variety of interesting stats. While electricity saw relatively similar figures to last year, gas consumption saw a reduction of 15 million kWh compared to 21/22 data, making the overall energy use **13 million kWh less than 21/22**. However, in stark contrast the spend was significantly increased due to increased costs associated with the energy crisis.

Waste, touring and business travel figures all saw large increases, although in these particular impacts the rises are more likely to do with sector recovery

**Totals per impact area**



after the pandemic and increased climate literacy providing more accurate and detailed reporting.

Comparing data across the years can be problematic; organisations change working patterns/hours, staff turnover, external influences such as energy prices and many other factors all make the like-for-like comparisons complex and challenging to interrogate. Yet the results here indicate that increased knowledge on environmental reporting provides more robust data.

\* Libraries/Literature/Galleries/Cultural/Circus Arts/Archives/Sport/Non-discipline specific – combined represent less than 2% of total

# National Portfolio – trends and analysis

There were 828 organisations within the portfolio that varied in terms of discipline, operations, activities and scale. Each year, the cohort of reporting organisations also varied, making direct comparisons year-on-year challenging. However, as we are at the end of the 2018-23 programme, it is an important moment to review progress made from the start of the portfolio period in 2018/19. With this in mind, we identified (co-located) organisations all of whom reported in the baseline year and have reported in the final year: 350 organisations reported on Energy, 276 on Water, and 208 on Waste. This makes a comparison across reference starting and ending years possible, albeit with caveats related to the changing nature, scale and mix of projects that make up the footprint of any particular organisation in any given year.

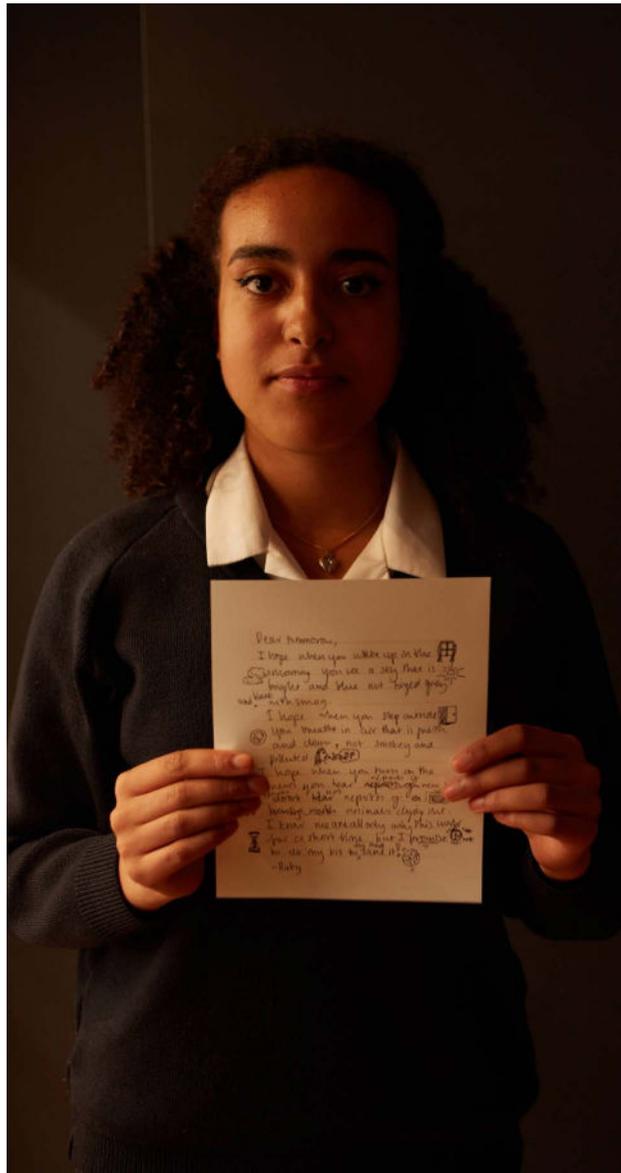


The data shows us that there was a **20% reduction in energy usage** (combined electricity and gas kWh) from the baseline year to 2022/23, which is a significant achievement. This represents a **36% reduction** across the 350 NPOs in energy related carbon emissions (combined electricity and gas CO<sub>2</sub>e) between the baseline year and final year.

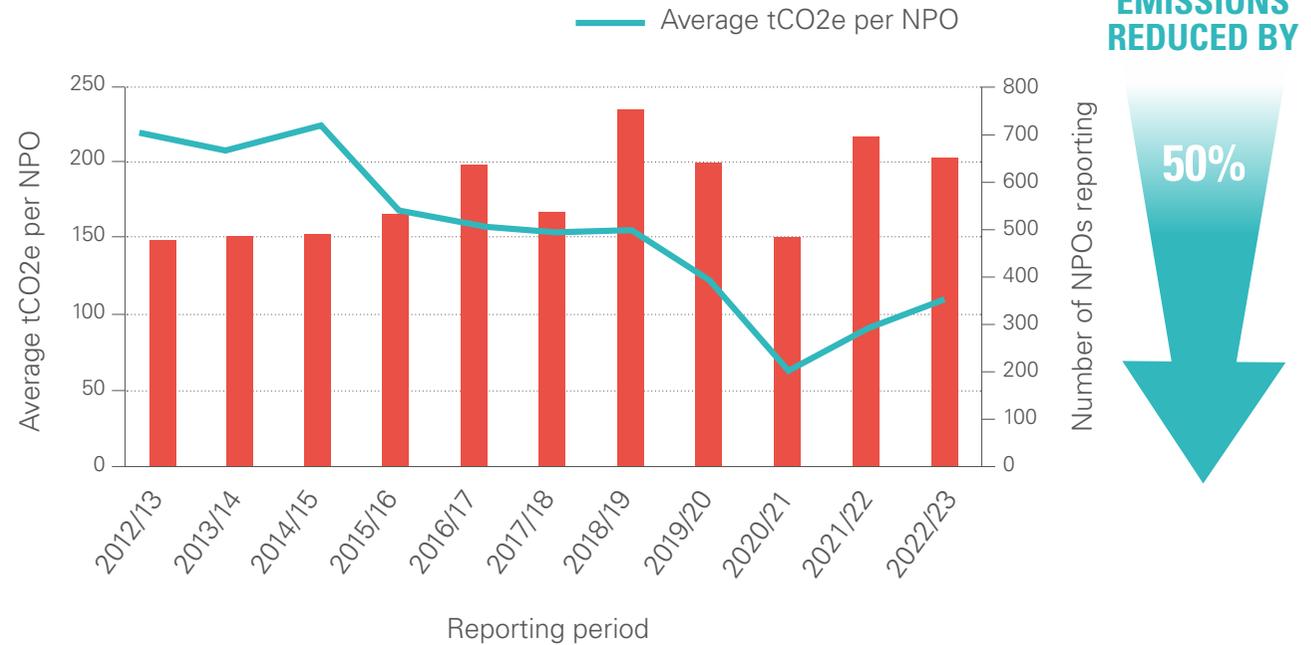
Comparing data from 2018 and 2023, a total of 276 organisations reported their water use in both years, and showed a 7% reduction over the five year period. Organisations generally obtain their water data through monitored meter readings making water monitoring and usage easier to track than some of the other data collection factors. The reduction is promising and is likely attributed to a mix of energy efficient taps and toilets, and education and better awareness of water consumption.

For waste, a total of 208 organisations reported in 2018 and 2023, revealing a striking increase of 74% in waste generation (7,241 tonnes in 2018-19 compared to 12,596 tonnes in 2022-23). Our inference would be that it is unlikely waste generation increased this significantly, but rather that systems and data collection have improved. This data can be used to inform future plans and actions so should be positive in the longer term.

Utility	2018-19	2022-23	% +/-
Energy (Electricity and Gas)	286,510,189 kWh	230,457,632 kWh	-20%
Energy (Electricity and Gas)	67,112,655 kgCO <sub>2</sub> e	43,194,351 kgCO <sub>2</sub> e	-36%
Water	810,392 m <sup>3</sup>	756,609 m <sup>3</sup>	-7%



## Average carbon emissions per NPO



More broadly, data reported in each year using the Creative Climate Tools since 2012/13 shows an indicative trend downward in the average emissions (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) per NPO<sup>5</sup>. This indicates that average emissions reported have reduced by 50% since environmental reporting began.

Beyond this, 68 NPO survey responses were received this year. Responses were almost

unanimous in their belief that it is important for Arts Council England to continue helping NPOs deliver a more environmentally sustainable future. Strong positive responses were also received in relation to commitment to measuring and reporting environmental impacts, and that reporting environmental data helps organisations to better understand their environmental impacts.

<sup>5</sup> The average emissions per NPO is calculated using the total carbon footprint of the whole portfolio reporting each year, published in annual reports, and dividing this by the number of NPOs reporting in each year. The groups of organisations reporting in each year varies, so this cannot be a 'like-for-like' comparison, and as such this is an indicative trend, and not an absolute value.

# Spotlight trends

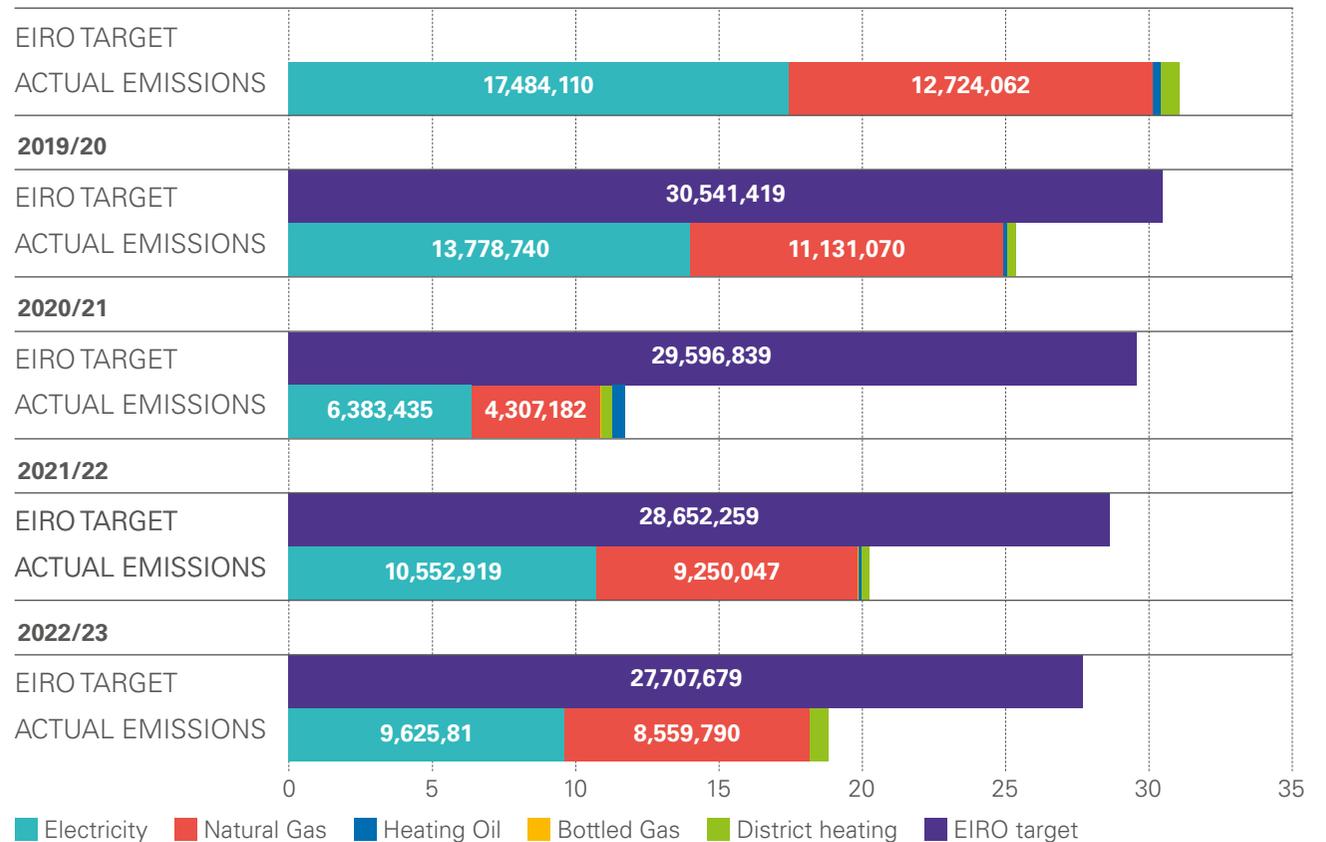
The Spotlight programme comprised a cohort of **30 organisations** working across **80 sites**, identified as collectively responsible for approximately 30% of the entire national portfolio carbon emissions. We looked back across the Spotlight group to focus on trends from across the programme’s five-year lifespan, including their reporting using Pilio’s online energy tool, which allows organisations to monitor and manage their energy consumption to save money, reduce environmental impacts, and report achievements across their building portfolio<sup>6</sup>.

The cohort worked to achieve Environmental Impact Reduction Objectives, or EIROs, put in place at the outset of the programme, in-line with the Paris Agreement using Science Based Targets (SBTi). These figures, though ambitious, were designed to be achievable and encourage ongoing good environmental management practice.

The data shows that, even allowing for the energy reductions that occurred during the pandemic, the Spotlight cohort consistently and gradually reduced their energy consumption and carbon emissions through the programme, achieving results that significantly exceeded their target EIROs.

## GHG emissions (kgCO2e) per fuel type, EIRO targets vs Actuals

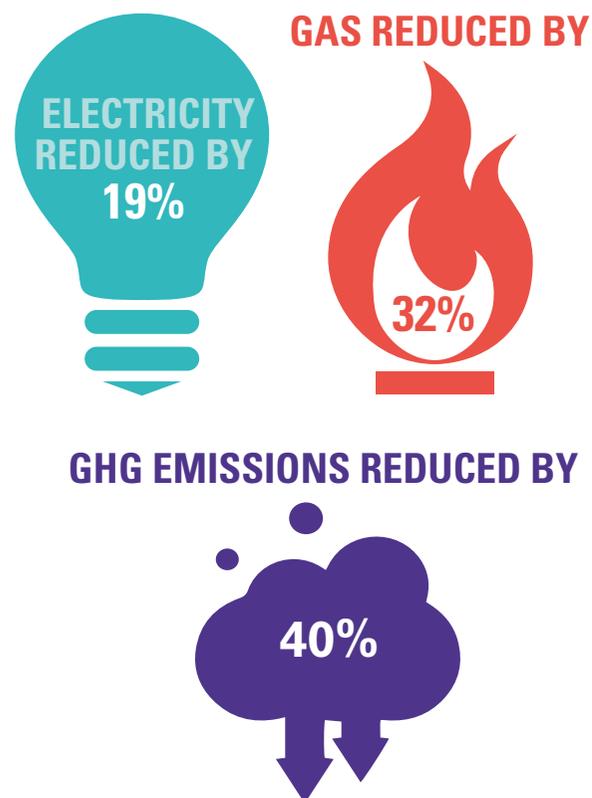
2018/19 (Baseline)



<sup>6</sup> In the absence of data, or where possible data errors have been identified, alternative datasets have been utilised (e.g the Pilio online tool or EIRO agreements) and excluded where adjustment was not possible or valid.

In terms of energy usage, over the five-year period this group of organisations has achieved a **total reduction of 19% electricity usage (kWh) and 32% gas usage (kWh)**.

At the start of the programme, we set a reduction target of 12% in Scope 1 and Scope 2 carbon emissions. The data shows that overall, the Spotlight cohort has achieved a **40% reduction in GHG emissions** (Scopes 1 and 2) compared to the baseline year 2018/19.



### National Grid: Decarbonisation effect

As with previous years, the decarbonisation effect of the national grid has played a significant role. Increases in wind, solar and biomass energy contributing to the UK’s electricity production mean that the grid’s emission factor has reduced by **32%**<sup>7</sup> between our baseline year of 2018/19 and the current year, 2022/23.

The 2022/23 carbon emissions (kgCO<sub>2</sub>e) from electricity are **45%** lower than the baseline emissions. Therefore, if no changes had been made to the 2022/23 emissions factor and the same amount of electricity had been used in 2018/19 as was used in 2022/23, the carbon emissions would be **32%** lower than baseline figures, attributed solely to the decarbonisation of the grid. This means that in addition to grid decarbonisation, the actual **carbon emissions associated with improved/reduced electricity usage** in 2022/23 consist of a **13%** reduction, surpassing the 12% reduction target set at the beginning of the programme. This reduction reflects a combination of factors such as changes in electricity usage and prices – significant increases in energy prices from 2022 enhanced the case for reduced energy use – and new ways of working i.e. home working and shifts in working hours, and of course, energy efficiency projects i.e. low energy lightbulbs or solar panel installation.

<sup>7</sup>The UK Grid electricity factor in 2018/19 was 0.28307 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/kWh and in 2022/23, it was reduced by 32% to 0.19338 kgCo<sub>2</sub>e/kWh due to decarbonisation mainly attributed to increasing wind, solar and biomass energy in the UK production mix.

### Gas usage reductions

#### Weather

Much of the UK uses gas central heating, therefore a correlation between gas usage and weather conditions is generally evident.

The annual degree days in 2022/23 were very closely matched to those in 2018/19, which allows for comparison as gas usage should have been roughly the same. As previously reported however, gas usage in 2022/23 saw a 32% reduction when compared to the baseline figures.

A combination of the lingering effects of the pandemic, coupled with the energy crisis and ongoing higher energy prices could go some way to explain the reduction in gas usage. Potential venue changes that could impact gas usage include:

- Provision of a reduced offering to customers, opting for winter closures or changes to opening hours
- Installation of more efficient heating management systems
- Reductions in the average set indoor temperatures to lessen heating bills.

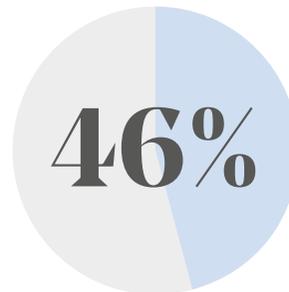
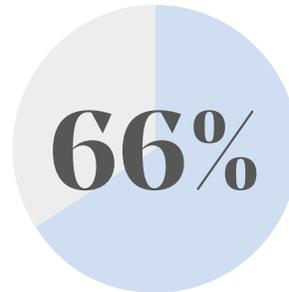
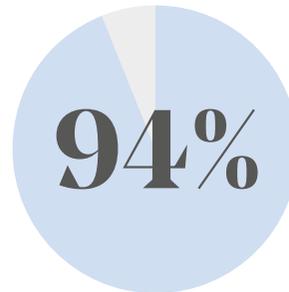
# Environmental Action Snapshot

In 2023, the final year of the programme 562 NPOs completed the Beyond Carbon survey on the Creative Climate Tools. The questions are split into four key themes, and designed to capture the environmental ideas and actions that go beyond carbon footprinting, recognising the benefits that these bring. 2018 statistics are also included here to demonstrate the progress that has been made over the past five years.

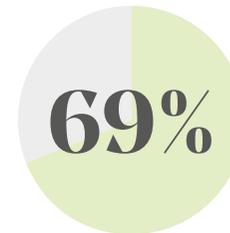
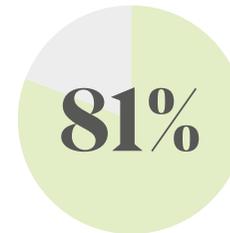


Wild Escape, Kettle's Yard, image credit My Linh Le

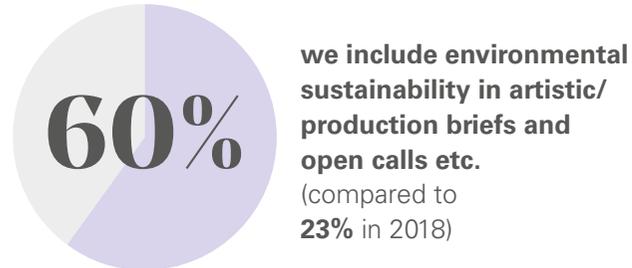
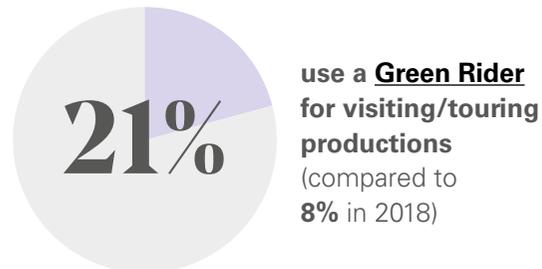
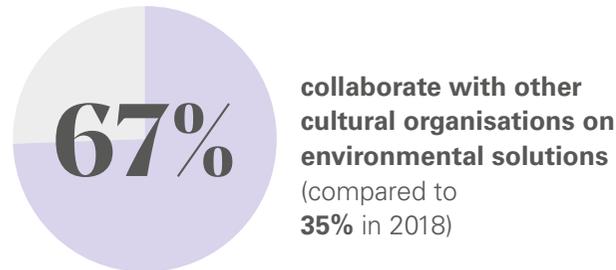
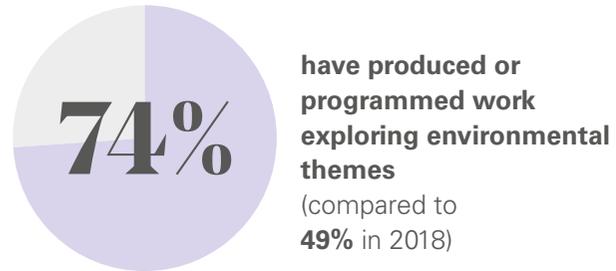
## GOOD GOVERNANCE



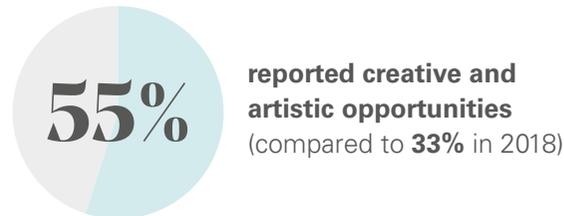
## OPERATIONAL PRACTICE



## ENGAGEMENT + COLLABORATION



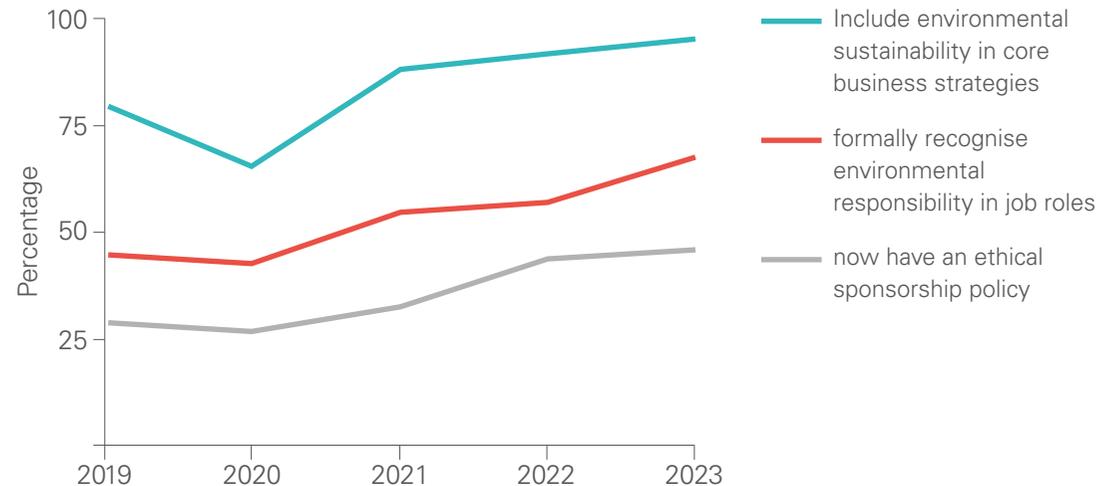
## BENEFITS AND VALUE



# Beyond Carbon Trends

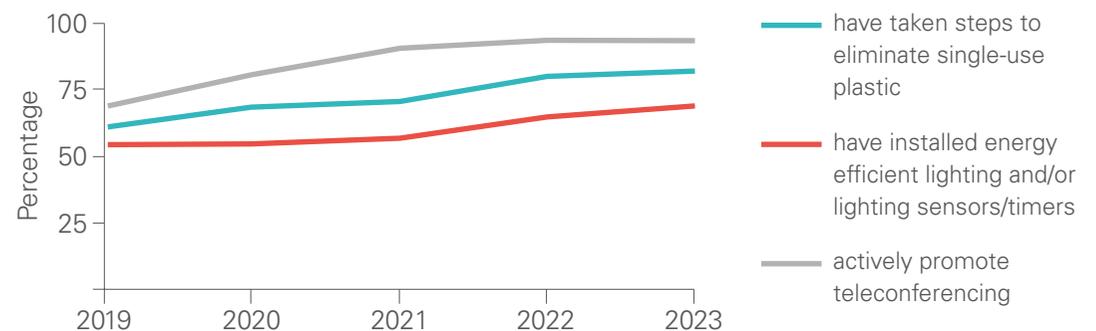
Overall trends in the indicators of **Good Governance** across the portfolio period showed a solid increase across all areas, despite the dip around the pandemic year. The data shows that organisations are embedding environmental responsibility within overall strategy setting, in job roles and responsibilities and also in their relationship with external sponsors. The upward trend indicates a sector that is solidifying knowledge around environmental issues and translating that into good governance.

## Good Governance

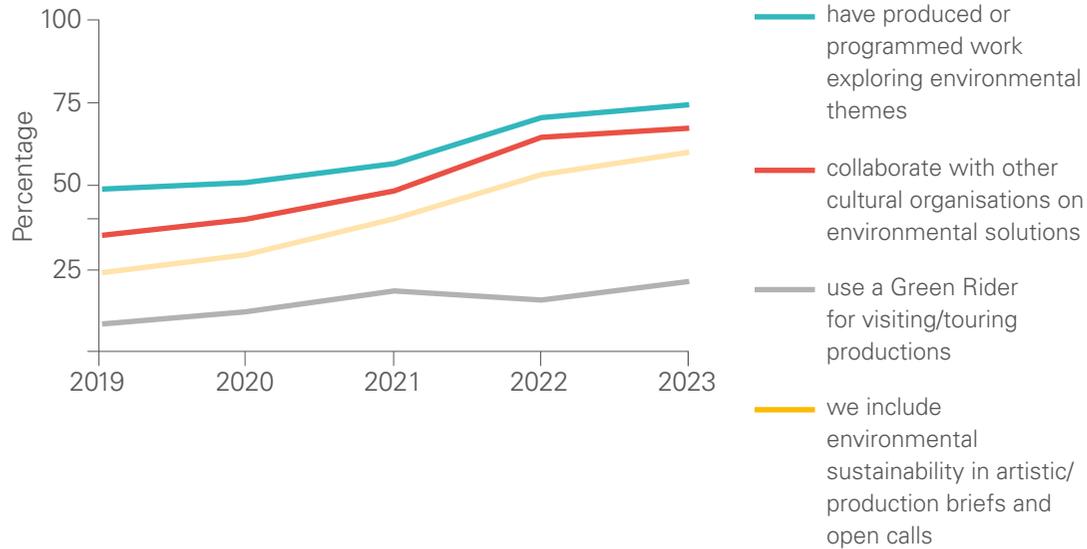


Indicators of good **Operational Practice** saw a consistent increase across the duration of the programme and unlike other areas in the Beyond Carbon survey, was less impacted during the pandemic years. In fact due to remote working, teleconferencing saw a greater jump throughout this period, and with buildings being closed to the public, organisations took opportunities to install energy efficient lighting and/or lighting sensors/timers. The trend indicates a sector increasingly doing what they can to take practical action within their operations and buildings.

## Operational Practice

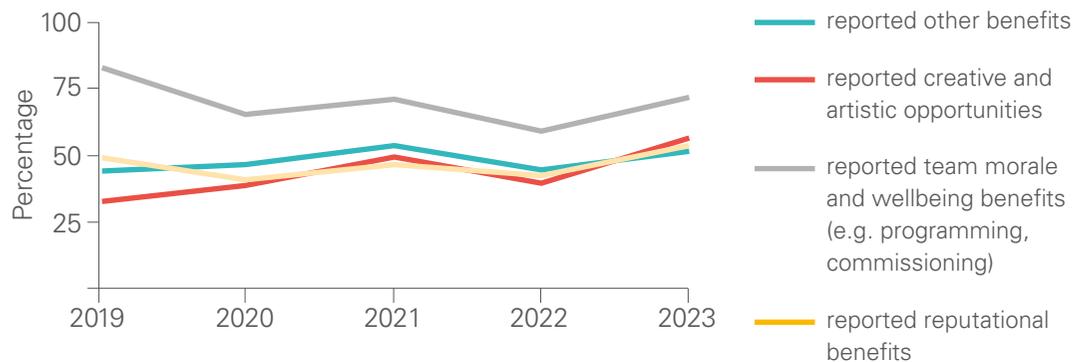


## Engagement and Collaboration



**Engagement and collaboration reporting saw some significant increases over the portfolio period.** Increases in environmentally themed work, collaboration across the sector on environmental solutions and including sustainability within briefs and open calls all saw solid growth through the programme. The use of green riders slightly decreased after the pandemic, aligned to a slower return to pre-pandemic practice because of the impacts on touring productions.

## Benefits and Value



**Benefits and Value** showed increases from the start of the portfolio period with a clear growth in creative and artistic opportunities. Morale and wellbeing remain high, and other benefits remain relatively steady, but with variations across the years. Considering the impact on the cultural sector from the pandemic, on job security and wellbeing of staff and freelancers, lost income from venue closures, as well as recent energy price increases and cost of living pressures, a relatively steady status can be seen as positive.

# Beyond Carbon Insights



**In 2022-23 organisations actively worked on their environmental responsibility. Key themes included collaborative activity and local engagement with communities, influencing others with environmental briefs and guidelines, and investing in sustainable buildings and changing operational practices.**

## Influencing others

Organisations implemented sustainable thinking in their planning, by including it in their briefs and open calls, and commissioning work that specifically addressed environmental responsibility, including climate justice and social issues. Organisations such as **Battersea Arts Centre** reported on being able to prioritise performance work that amplified the ways in which the effects of climate change disproportionately affect marginalised groups.

Many touring organisations reported on encouraging artists and partners to implement sustainable measures and provided guidelines to help them action this. **Sadlers Wells Trust** successfully implemented two green riders, adapting

one for their touring shows and another for the companies visiting them – including use of water fountains, conserving energy, waste recycling and truck drivers switching off idling engines.

In addition to the Creative Climate Tools, websites, social media and newsletters were the main mechanisms for organisations to publicly report on their environmental data.

**Milton Keynes Arts Centre** went a step further through #EnvironmentalMonday in which they dedicated their social media space to displaying environmental ideas.

## Collaborating and engaging in place

There was a plethora of examples of organisations collaborating and supporting one another across the sector and with non-arts organisations too.

**Headlong Theatre Ltd.** worked with the Theatre Green Book and The Young Vic regarding sustainable co-producing. **BACKLIT** initiated NEST (Nottingham Environmental Sustainability Team) to encourage better carbon neutral ways of working collectively across the cultural venues in the city. **Bournemouth Arts by the Sea Festival** works with green partners each year to engage audiences on sustainability and attends What Next? Dorset Steering Group as well as the local council's Sustainability Action Group. **The Creative Art House** connected with a

major property in the city centre, reaching out to the local creative community; “Makey Wakey” used underutilised shop units to create art and worked to reduce material waste and energy use.

There were also many examples of organisations working with other industries, charities, contractors, suppliers and consultants on environmental issues. From **Birmingham Open Media** discussing the local area and environmental issues and future development of the area, to the **London Transport Museum** commissioning *Introba* to produce a decarbonisation report, which forecast carbon reduction for various measures of intervention to their building, informing their investment choices.

Local communities are at the heart of many organisations such as **Manchester Jewish Museum** whose Climate Fresk workshop was attended by representatives from charities and local organisations in Cheetham and Crumpsall. As part of their education project ‘Art Makes Children Powerful’ **Metal Culture Ltd** worked with eleven schools, encouraging children to use their outdoor environments to inspire art making.

**Film and Video Umbrella** reported on reputational benefits in their audience development from engaging in environmentally focused work. A majority of their audience, having never previously engaged with their work, stated in their feedback that the environmental subject matter was either ‘important’ or ‘very important’ in their decision to attend the exhibition. Feedback from their ‘In the Forest Something Stirred’ exhibition included: “*You made it easy to connect back with nature by being aware of ourselves in her presence*” and

*“It has allowed me to learn more about the impact of deforestation around the world.”*

### Investing in sustainable buildings and changing operational practice

Many organisations provided examples of reusing and repurposing sets and materials, purchasing second-hand equipment and disposing of materials by giving them away to be reused by other arts organisations. There were also examples of sustainable decision-making such as **Clod Ensemble** creating work that didn’t require complex set builds, reducing the needs for carbon intensive materials and ensuring their tours could be transported via public transport.

Highlighting the benefits of data collection, a number of reporting organisations have continued or started to survey their audiences on topics such as travel and their environmental awareness and attitudes.

**Chichester Festival Theatre** saw large annual returns on their ground source heat pump investment, while the solar panels at **Camden Art Centre** generated the equivalent of a month’s building-wide electricity usage. **Halle Concerts Society** gained funding from Wolfson Foundation for solar panels; **Multistory** received funding to deliver a green cultural programme with local communities,

directly resulting from their commitment to support the environmental agenda.

Climate literacy is growing, and organisations’ actions reflect this growing confidence. At **Community Arts North West** all staff and five board members and artists received carbon literacy certification from the Carbon Literacy Trust, while **Exeter Phoenix** was shortlisted for a live music sustainability award.

While data collection provides the means to analyse carbon emissions, the responses to Beyond Carbon provide the stories behind the facts and figures. It is examples like those shown here that inspire and motivate others to take action within their own organisations and communities.



# Stories from the sector

## Barnsley Museums – Museums – biodiversity

The museums showcase and share the value of traditional land management methods in their heritage sites. Public engagement opportunities include hedge laying and willow weaving, which create valuable nesting, resting, and feeding conditions for diverse birds including red and amber list species, improving local biodiversity. The museum also sits on the local authority carbon management group.



Willow weaved public art by Maggie Cooper, Barnsley Museums, image credit Kyte Photography

## Courtyard – Combined Arts – sustainable waste management

Courtyard, a rural organisation in Herefordshire, have worked to champion sustainable waste management across their operations. Their waste management partners Pedicargo now collect their food, glass and paper waste by bicycle. For travel to and from the venue, they have installed a Beryl bike bay and free parking spaces for Herefordshire car share clubs. They will install electric vehicle charging points in early 2024. The Courtyard are gaining recognition as an example of ethical environmental practice, nominated for two different regional sustainability awards in 2022, and they received national recognition in 2022 through the Cultural Health and Wellbeing Alliance for environmental efforts including travel and transport.



The Courtyard Building, image credit Luke Evans



### Watershed – Combined Arts – climate justice

Watershed explored climate justice through the lens of the creative sector in collaboration with *tiata fahodzi*, a British African Heritage contemporary theatre company. A key aim of this action research project was to create space for Global Majority artists to collectively explore this sprawling topic, to create space for joint exploration of the intersecting crises and to learn how creative organisations can respond to climate justice and create climate solutions. Reflections include the importance of being open-minded and responsive to the leadership of Global Majority artists, organisers and scholars, many of whom are already working on creative action towards dismantling systems of inequality, exploitation and oppression from the bottom up and middle out, and exploring what creative resistance to these complex issues looks like in different contexts.

Nature walk, Watershed, image credit Marcus Bernard

### Kettle’s Yard – Visual Arts – education and engagement

Kettle’s Yard engaged with children from Chesterton Primary School to explore nature and create an artwork imagining a natural habitat, as part of the nationwide project The Wild Escape. They worked with artist facilitator Jacquie Campbell to investigate the trees on their doorsteps and their ecological importance. Once back in the classroom, students created concertina books using recycled materials to share what they had discovered about their chosen tree and the creatures that might inhabit it. They created a forest of books which was displayed at Kettle’s Yard on Earth Day 2023. The project has changed teachers’ perspectives on reusing materials and given confidence in putting a spotlight on public programme events focusing on sustainability.



CoLAB, Kettle’s Yard, image credit My Linh Le



## Manchester Craft and Design Centre (MCAD) – Visual Arts – energy improvements in a historic venue

MCAD are working to improve the environmental performance of their 150-year-old building (originally built for a fish and poultry market) and better support the local community. Funded by the Northwest Evergreen Fund, a comprehensive audit covered long- and short-term recommended strategies to reduce their carbon footprint. They also completed internal discussions and a community consultation. As a result, MCAD changed energy suppliers to 100% renewable power, and installed infrared panel heaters to heat their objects (rather than the surrounding air), to reduce energy consumption.



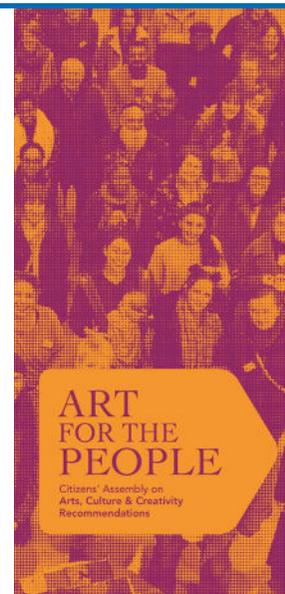
## Kiln Theatre – Theatre – warm spaces during the energy crisis

The cost of living and energy crisis caused a great deal of concern for many in Kiln Theatre’s local community in the last year, and the organisation were also concerned about the impact of rising costs on isolation, marginalisation and loneliness over the winter period. Kiln Theatre invited the community to step inside, socialise, study, relax or refresh in a free warm space, helping people to save on their heating bills and bring down their personal use of fossil fuels. They collaborated with a local food charity named Sufra NW London to provide a hot nutritious vegetarian/vegan meal to those using the warm space.

## Talking Birds – Theatre – citizen changemakers

Building on their 2021 Citizens’ Assembly to collectively imagine “How will arts, culture and creativity help shape a better future for Coventry?“, Talking Birds adopted all nine of the Assembly’s ambitious recommendations to drive people-powered change across the city. Over the past year a small group of Assembly participants has, together with 64 Million Artists, completed Creative Citizen Changemaker training, with a view to grow the capacity in their neighbourhoods and begin live prototyping the **Neighbourhood Hubs recommendation**. They are continuing to talk to Coventry Council and other policy makers about how citizens can have more direct input into, and influence over, policy making.

*“With conversations we can sow the seeds of possibility and agency, while shared experience can build community. When imagining and rehearsing different futures we can see how we can make change. And with learning and experience we can grow the confidence and connections to do so.” – Talking Birds*



Top image: Manchester Craft and Design Centre, image credit Dan Eden.  
 Bottom image: Art for the People, Talking Birds, graphic design by Andrew Moore, image credit Rachel Bunce.

Kiln Theatre, image credit Philip Vile

## Wolverhampton City Council – Visual Arts – creative environmental responses

Wolverhampton Art Gallery partnered with global climate art and storytelling project, DearTomorrow, to meaningfully engage community members in climate conversations. This project aimed to help shift the narrative around the Black Country and its past, inviting locals to view works in the collection, reflect on the area’s industrial legacy and share their hopes, fears, and climate commitments for the future. The resulting artwork, poetry, and recordings were presented in an interactive exhibition, DearTomorrow: Dear Wolverhampton. This yearlong partnership featured two participatory exhibitions, and collaborations with artists, the local university, Boundary Way and Gatis Community Space. Together, the Gallery, DearTomorrow, and community partners engaged 19,000+ people and gathered 2100+ contributions, which now live in DearTomorrow’s digital collection and travelling exhibit.



## Oxford Contemporary Music – Music – exploring creative environmental practice

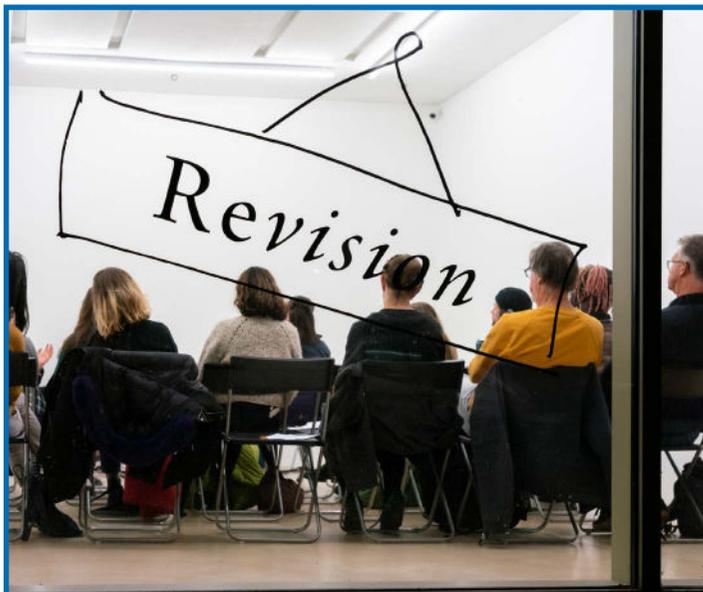
Oxford Contemporary Music initiated the Communicating Climate Crisis Lab, a three-day residential that brought together artists, commissioners, activists and producers with the goal of sharing skills and exchanging experiences to improve the impacts of artists’ climate-related work. Working in collaboration with 101 Outdoor Arts, the residential helped the group to explore their motivations for creating work addressing climate issues, and to think critically about their intentions to influence audiences with their work.



Oxford Contemporary Music and 101 Outdoor Arts

## Peer – Visual Arts – research and sustainability programme

Peer hosted *Revision*, a research and events programme that explored repair, collaboration and evaluation. From November 2022 to February 2023, no exhibitions were presented, and the gallery was used as a site for research and discussion. The programme acted as a ‘reset’ moment providing a space to reflect. Dani Admiss and Angela YT Chan discussed their work on art and climate justice, with Admiss discussing her work on Sunshine Doesn’t Need a Pipeline, a community-led collective decarbonisation plan for the arts and beyond. As a result of *Revision*, Peer’s team engaged in policy development and sought additional training opportunities, including participating in Hackney’s Green Business Seminar.



Top image: Dear Tomorrow, Dear Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton Art Gallery.  
 Bottom image: Owning the Future Book Talk, Peer, image credit Sam Nightingale

# Key Findings

## Engagement and Commitment are strong.

Reporting numbers remained high throughout the programme, enabling us to co-locate the baseline data of 350 organisations with their final year of data. Despite the global pandemic and the energy / cost of living crises, the portfolio committed to reporting, using their data to inform actions.

Organisations went beyond carbon counting, reporting a diverse range of activities and actions that have increased over time across aspects of governance, operational practice, engagement and collaboration. For example, collaboration with other cultural organisations on environmental solutions increased from 35% in 2018-19 to 67% in 2022-23.

## Decarbonisation shows progress.

In our targeted energy reduction programme, Spotlight, this cohort exceeded their 12% science-based targets over five years, achieving an **overall reduction in GHG emissions of 40%**.

More widely across the portfolio, we have seen emissions reductions in almost all impact areas across the co-located organisations. This cross-section of the portfolio achieved an **overall reduction of 20% in energy consumption since 2018/19** (including electricity and gas). While some of the emissions reductions can be attributed to the decarbonisation of the grid this achievement is likely due to a combination of improved knowledge and skills, improved operational practices and technologies, and behaviour changes. The carbon emission reductions achieved since 2018-19 are 32% less than at baseline from this co-located group.

The emissions reductions evidenced here are promising, but there is still much to be done. Data will never provide a fully accurate picture, but it is an excellent starting point to inform organisations business plans and future environmental actions.



# Looking ahead

The Environmental Programme has both contributed to and witnessed wide scale awareness, commitment and action from the cultural sector on environmental responsibility. We are building on the learning from a decade of implementation and transparent reporting on progress. *Let's Create* and the Environmental Responsibility Investment Principle underpins our work in this area.

We have now begun to roll out a new environmental programme to the new portfolio, in partnership with Julie's Bicycle. This programme has a transformative agenda to build a fit for the future arts and culture sector, aiming to: empower leadership at a governance level, decarbonise at scale and speed, build resilience and adapt to our changing climate, put climate justice at the heart of climate action and inspire wider action on the interrelated climate, justice and nature crises.

Programme strands already active are:

- Board Environmental Champions: a training and peer networking programme to help to embed environmental responsibility at a governance level.
- Transforming Energy: decarbonisation of cultural buildings with a focus on reducing energy

<sup>8</sup> <https://unfccc.int/documents/631600>

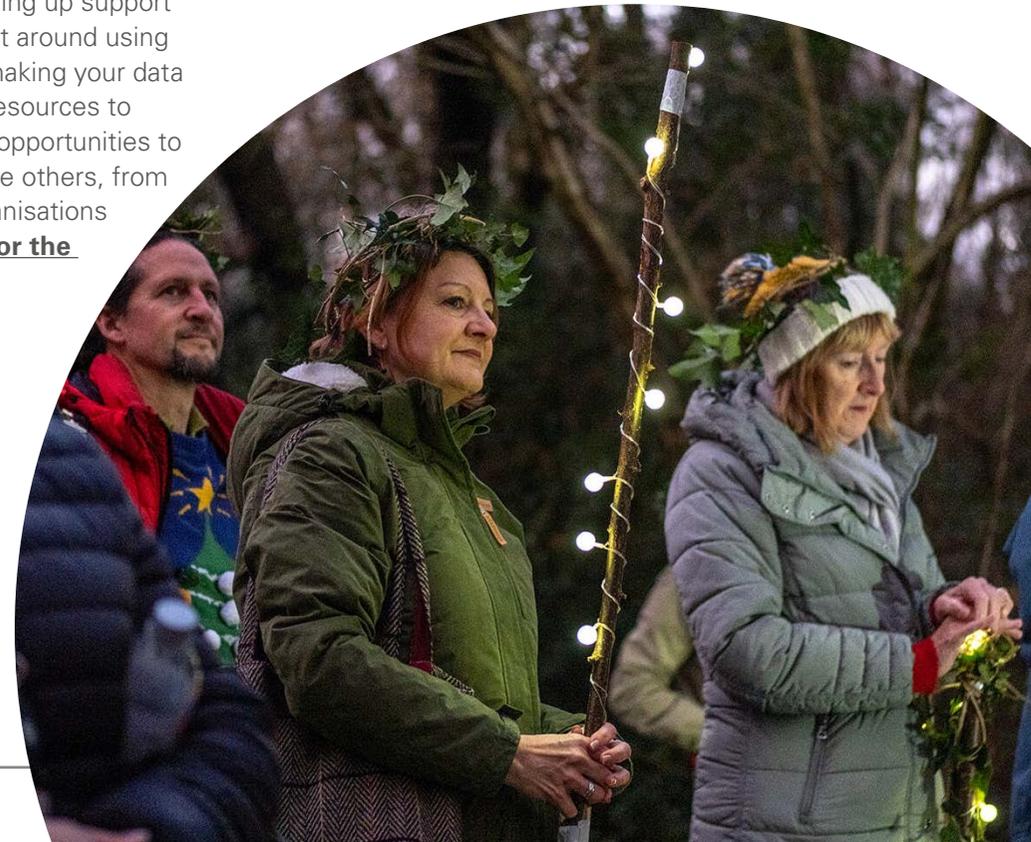
impacts, across two strands: for cohorts of capital investment ready organisations, and a broader, portfolio-wide introductory programme Buildings Net Zero Energy.

Future strands will focus on diverse emerging environmental leaders, greening creative practice, and building resilience with a focus on place.

In addition, the programme is scaling up support with self-paced e-learning, support around using the **Creative Climate Tools** and making your data meaningful, alongside a suite of resources to signpost to sector initiatives, and opportunities to learn, share with peers, and inspire others, from individuals and freelancers to organisations and communities. **[Sign up here for the Julie's Bicycle newsletter.](#)**

The UNFCCC Global Stocktake report<sup>8</sup> recognises the need for systems transformations across all sectors and contexts, with an increased focus on inclusion and equity, adaptation, and loss and damage, all of which are informed and driven by local contexts and priorities.

It recognises that a whole-of-society approach is needed for the action that must happen now, and at scale. Herein lies the power of the cultural sector: to harness the engagement, collaboration, role modelling and inspiration that can make a step-change towards the just and regenerative world that can serve us all.



# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Spotlight and Accelerator organisations

Spotlight organisations	
Baltic Contemporary Arts Centre	National Theatre
Royal Liverpool Philharmonic	Theatre Royal Plymouth
Birmingham Museums Trust	Northern Stage
Royal Opera House	Theatre Royal Stratford East
Bristol Museums	Nottingham Playhouse
Royal Shakespeare Company	Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery
Curve Theatre	Opera North Limited
Sadler's Wells	Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums
Glyndebourne Productions Ltd	Serpentine Galleries
Sage Gateshead	University of Oxford Museums
HOME Manchester	Unicorn Theatre
Sheffield Theatres Trust Ltd	Whitechapel Gallery
Leeds Museums and Galleries	Royal Exchange Theatre Company Ltd
Southbank Centre	Whitworth
The Lyric Theatre Hammersmith Limited	Young Vic Company



Accelerator programme Cohort II
Fast Familiar
Abandon Normal Devices
Arts Catalyst Courtyard Trust and Watts Gallery
D6 and Baltic
LADA and Gasworks
Barbican, Artillery, London Borough of Waltham Forest
SS Great Britain
Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance (consortium of consortia)
Knowle West Media Centre
Norfolk and Norwich Festival
Horniman Museum and Gardens



## Appendix 2: List of case studies

Organisation	Theme / topic	Art Form	Region
<b>BEYOND CARBON</b>			
Barnsley Museums	Biodiversity	Museums	Yorkshire
Courtyard	Sustainable waste management	Combined Arts	West Midlands England
Kettle’s Yard	Education and engagement	Visual Arts	East of England
Kiln Theatre	Warm spaces during the energy crisis	Theatre	London
Manchester Craft and Design Centre (MCAD)	Energy improvements in a historic venue	Visual Arts	North West England
Oxford Contemporary Music	Exploring creative environmental practice	Music	South East England
Peer	Inclusion and sustainability programme	Visual Arts	London
Talking Birds	Citizen changemakers	Theatre	West Midlands England
Watershed	Climate justice	Combined Arts	South West England
Wolverhampton City Council	Creative environmental responses	Galleries	West Midlands England

## Appendix 3: Methodology

The data used for this analysis come both from self-reporting via the Creative Climate Tools and from the Pilio online building energy management software.

Data was analysed for the 2022/23 reporting period, which spans from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

Where possible data errors were found, these were adjusted to the best knowledge by either the Julie's Bicycle team or by Pilio using other datasets (e.g., the Pilio online tool for current or previous years, EIROs agreements), and excluded where the adjustment was not possible or uncertain.

Only five Spotlight organisations did not report data in 2022/23. Electricity and gas usage was extracted from the Pilio software (where available) or estimated to match their Environmental Impact Reduction Objectives targets for 2022/23. The total estimated usage amounts to 11% of the total Spotlight electricity usage and 15% of the total Spotlight gas usage.

In calculating the environmental impacts, Pilio applied the Creative Climate Tools carbon results provided in the database.

For the Spotlight analysis, Pilio used the DEFRA carbon conversion factors for 2022<sup>9</sup> and applied these to energy usage converted in kWh.

For the cost analysis, costs were based on an approximate unit price of **6.27 p/kWh for gas and 22.59 p/kWh for electricity**<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>9</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greenhouse-gas-reporting-conversion-factors-2022>

<sup>10</sup> Calculated averages for 2022 Q2-3-4 and 2023 Q1 of gas and electricity prices in the non-domestic sector, including Climate Change Levy (source [here](#))





### Colocation analysis 2018-19 to 2022-23

A colocation analysis was conducted in order to try to understand trends between 2018/19 and 2022/23. This involved studying organisations and their buildings' energy, water and waste figures both at the beginning and end of the period. To ensure a good quality outcome, buildings with good data at both the beginning and the end of the period have been considered.

By doing so, it is possible to reduce uncertainties and errors that can occur when using the whole portfolio, which might change over time or have poor data for one of the two years in scope. The analysis was carried out using two databases: the one provided for the 2018/19 ACE analysis, and the one provided for the 2022/23 analysis.

The analysis focused on Energy (Electricity, Gas, and Onsite Renewables), Waste and Water usage. Energy results are shown as a sum of electricity, gas and onsite renewable usage per year. District heating has been excluded because this energy type is not found within the 2018/19 database headers.

By excluding the potential data errors, the sample has a total of 350 organisations in it.

Within this sample, the above filters have been applied again using the same rationale, this time on total water usage and total waste generation. This resulted in a sample of 276 organisations for the water analysis and 208 organisations for waste.

## Appendix 4: Glossary

- **Beyond Carbon** – a new field on the Creative Carbon Tools for organisations to feedback on environmental ideas and actions beyond just carbon footprinting.
- **Carbon footprint** – a measure of greenhouse gas emissions based on energy, travel, waste. Most commonly given in tonnes of carbon dioxide (tCO<sub>2</sub>e).
- **Net carbon zero** – a net-zero target is not the same as zero carbon, which means that no carbon will be emitted at all. A net zero commitment allows for remaining greenhouse gas emissions when all reductions have been made to be ‘balanced’ — removed — with an equivalent amount via offsets such as peatland preservation, carbon credits or carbon capture technologies.
- **Circular economy** – designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials circulating within the economy at their highest value for as long as possible, and allowing natural systems to regenerate. This is in direct contrast to the current linear economy based on a ‘take, make, dispose’ model.
- **The Colour Green** – part of the Arts Council’s environment programme, a podcast and Lab exploring issues of environmental justice and training cultural leaders and artists of colour.
- **Creative Climate Tools** – a set of free online tools developed by Julie’s Bicycle for cultural venues, events, offices and tours to report on their environmental impacts, calculate their carbon footprint and track progress over time.
- **Climate justice** – the political and ethical dimensions of climate/ environmental change, the root causes, effects and mitigation efforts.
- **Divestment** – generally associated with fossil fuel investment, moving money out of fossil fuels by, for example, choosing banks, pension providers, insurance providers, funders who do not invest in or make money from fossil fuel extraction.
- **Environmental Impact Reduction Objectives (EIROs)** – Spotlight organisations are supported to improve environmental literacy, strategy and expertise, to achieve ambitious, yet attainable, Environmental Impact Reduction Objectives (EIROs), and create governance frameworks that support the longer-term resilience of cultural institutions.
- **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** – the United Nations body which convenes thousands of scientists from all over the globe to regularly assess and report climate change science and resulting implications for policymakers.
- **Paris Agreement** – a global commitment, negotiated within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and signed in Paris in 2016, to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius, a target subsequently revised by the UNFCCC to 1.5.
- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** – in October 2015 more than 150 countries adopted the 17 SDGs to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all by 2030. For the Goals to be reached, everyone must play their part: governments, organisations, businesses and civil society. It is generally acknowledged that in order for meaningful progress to be made towards the SDGs, all parts of society must work together to meet the targets.

## Appendix 5: Resources and further reading

### Julie’s Bicycle resources developed under Arts Council England’s Environmental Programme

- Briefing: [Counting on Culture: How to stop financing the environmental crises](#)
- Blog: [Green Riders: Can we Make Touring Greener?](#)
- Programme: [ACE Environmental Programme 2023-26](#)
- Report – [Energy Impacts: Taking meaningful action in the midst of a crisis.](#)
- Guidelines – [Environmental Policy and Action plans: An overview](#)
- The Creative Climate Justice [Resource Hub](#)
- Creative climate justice [guide](#)
- Briefing – [Food culture: The impacts of what we consume](#)
- [Taking the Temperature](#) series
- [Culture: The Missing Link – an online event at COP26](#)
- [Policy portal](#) including our COP26 Call To Action and [Arts Council England animation](#)
- Briefing report: [Putting a price on Carbon](#)
- Webinar: [Putting a price on carbon](#)
- Briefing Report: [Environmental Sustainability in the Digital Age of Culture](#)
- Webinar: [Sustainable digital creativity](#)
- Webinar: [Sustainable cultural mobility](#)
- Webinar series: [Creative Climate Literacy 101](#)
- [Creative Climate Chats](#)
- [How Can Cultural Organisations Adapt to Climate Change?](#)

### Other Julie’s Bicycle resources

- Arts Council England “Our Environmental Responsibility: from understanding to action”
- Top Tips Guides for [Museums](#) and [Music](#) sector





# Julie's Bicycle

CREATIVE • CLIMATE • ACTION

## Arts Council England

Arts Council England  
The Hive  
49 Lever Street  
Manchester  
M1 1FN

Email: [enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk)

Phone: 0161 934 4317

@ace\_national

Facebook /artscouncilofengland

X @ace\_national

Charity registration number: 1036733

## Julie's Bicycle

**Founded in 2007 to respond to the climate crisis, Julie's Bicycle is working globally across the creative sector to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and catalyse the green creative economy.**

Working with over 2,000 organisations, NGOs and governments worldwide, Julie's Bicycle has developed an approach which harnesses the power of the creative sector to communicate the reality of the climate crisis, advocate for science-based solutions, take bold practical action, and offer support and advice to those who share their vision. The team blends environmental expertise with arts and cultural sector experience, and the freely available resources constitute the most comprehensive library of good environmental practice developed specifically for the arts and culture sectors anywhere in the world.

Designed and developed by Julie's Bicycle, the Creative Climate Tools – a suite of carbon calculators and a certification scheme – are the recognised benchmark for sustainability achievements within the creative industries.

Since 2012, Julie's Bicycle has been the Arts Council's contracted delivery partner for supporting its funded organisations in reporting their carbon footprint, and developing environmental policy and action plans.

X @JuliesBicycle

Instagram @julies\_bicycle

Charity registration number: 1153441